THE Reconstructionist

Vol. IX. May 14, 1943 Iyar 9, 5703 No. 7

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REALITIES AND VALUES

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EDITORIALS

THE ELECTIONS TO THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONFERENCE

THE preparations for the American Jewish Conference (née the American Jewish Assembly) have reached a new stage. The stage of preliminary negotiation is over and that of nomination and election of delegates has begun.

American Jewry should take these elections most seriously. Owing to the anarchic state of our Jewish communal life, it is not often that we are given an opportunity to elect those who are to determine the policies of the American Jewish community and speak in its behalf. It is to be hoped that, as democratic ideas take a stronger hold on our people, the opportunity for such action will present itself more frequently and that, eventually, a permanent democratic conference or assembly of American Jewry will be organized. At any rate, in the present situation, Jews should understand that the first *mitzvah* in the *torah* of democracy is the conscientious exercise of the suffrage.

We therefore urge all our readers to vote in the forthcoming elections and to bring out the votes of the membership of whatever Jewish organizations they belong to. We also want to offer some advice, which we should like our readers to pass on to others on the kind of delegates who should receive their votes.

In the first place, it goes without saying that the mental and moral qualifications of candidates should be kept in mind. Men must be chosen who answer to the biblical criteria by being "able men, such as fear God (i.e., conscientious men), men of truth, hating unjust gain." The public should beware of ambitious politicians who exploit such elections for personal advantage though they may never previously have shown concern about Jewish problems. The issues at stake are too important to be entrusted to just anybody who directly or indirectly solicits votes on the ground that he is a good fellow and would like us to vote for him.

But there are even men of excellent mental capacity and high moral integrity who should nevertheless be regarded as disqualified for the tasks entrusted to the Conference. Many Jews possess brilliant minds and a high degree of social idealism but are completely out of sympathy with Judaism and haunted by Jewish self-hate. If they participate in Jewish life it is with a design to reduce its functioning to a minimum. Such are the "euthanasian Jews" described in Dr. Kaplan's article, *Survivalists and Euthana-*

sians, which is printed elsewhere in this issue. They do not deserve the vote of Jews who believe in the value of Jewish life. No matter how much we may respect their characters and capacities and no matter how great may be their achievements for the civic community, we should refrain from voting for them. Even the great and good are not qualified to represent the Jewish people unless they are not only great and good *men* but great and good *Jews,* unless their attitude toward Jewish life is a loyal one and their understanding of Judaism is adequate.

Finally, not even all Jewish survivalists of good character and personal ability are worthy to be chosen to represent us. We should inform ourselves in advance of the candidate's attitude on the specific issues of the Conference and vote only for those whose attitude we approve. These issues are two: (1) the securing for Jews of equal rights with non-Jews in the diaspora after the war, including group rights wherever minority groups are constitutionally recognized, and (2) the securing of the rights of the Jewish people with reference to Palestine.

On the first of these issues, there will probably not be much division of opinion. It is hard to imagine any Jew who would want Jews to be politically and legally discriminated against. But, on the second issue, there are bound to be many differences of opinion. There are among us anti-Zionists, non-Zionists and Zionists. There are some who would be contented with a "cultural center" in Palestine, or with an Arab-Jewish bi-national state in which Jews would be a permanent minority, while others would be satisfied with nothing less than the official Zionist program based on the Biltmore resolutions. Those resolutions call for the opening of Palestine to Jewish immigration in accordance with Jewish need, the turning over to the Jewish Agency of immigration into Palestine, and the opportunity for Jews to become a majority there and to establish a Jewish commonwealth.

Our advice is to vote only for persons who are committed to the program of the Biltmore resolutions. We Jews were given a solemn international pledge after the first World War with respect to a "national home for the Jewish people in Palestine." Any representation of American Jewry which condones a repudiation of that pledge would be betraying the hopes, aspirations and vital needs of Jews all over the world. But the solemn pledge contained in the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate has been interpreted out of existence by the legalistic *pilpul* of the British Foreign Office. This makes it necessary to render explicit the implicit meaning of the Balfour Declaration and to safeguard its fulfilment. The Biltmore resolutions aim at just that. It will be no easy task to get our just claims recognized in the modern world. But nothing would be so fatal to our chances as a policy of defeatism. We must, therefore, stand by our guns and elect to the Conference only Jews who will exert themselves to the utmost to secure for the Jewish people the one place on God's earth to which it has a historic title.

THE BERMUDA CONFERENCE

IT IS a good thing that, because of the closing of the normal channels of communication, countless numbers of refugees, scattered all over the globe, will not learn of the futile outcome of the discussions in Bermuda. The crumbs fallen from the Bermuda table would only intensify, rather than relieve, the pangs of those whose lives have been shattered.

The calling of the Bermuda Conference was clearly an aswer to the pressing demands made by the conscience of the world, which insisted that the policy of blindness and deafness of the Allied Gov-

ernments to the needs of these persecuted and ravaged individuals must come to an early end. But, from the beginning, the political maneuvers of the Anglo-American delegates raised doubts and suspicions in the minds of many persons who looked upon the refugee problem realistically. There were those who immediately recognized that the Bermuda Conference would be merely a gesture, a sort of infant-pacifier, to quiet the cries of those who demanded action now, before it was too late. It appears that the suspicions of the doubters have been confirmed. The latest reports indicate that, after days of discussion, only "confidential statements" have been prepared, and relief plans exist only in general terms.

One thing, however, the conference has definitely established, as far as Jewish refugees are concerned: the impossibility of formulating an effective program for resettlement without placing Palestine on the agenda.

The argument that Palestine had to be ruled out, in order not to disturb Moslem-Jewish relations, is revealed as insincere by what is happening in North Africa. If this omission is due to a desire to appease anti-Semites (be they Jewish or non-Jewish), and the politicians of the Moslem world, the folly of pursuing appeasement policies has already been proved over and over again. Its repetition in this instance is very hard to explain.

Well, what now?

We must raise our voices again. We must begin where we left off, challenging the conscience of the world not to rest until something is done to help bring some measure of lasting relief to the persecuted, oppressed and starved masses wandering over the face of the world, or dying gradually in the dirty prisons and the filthy concentration camps of a bloody Europe.

This time let the protest be louder and more emphatic than ever before!

GIRAUD'S "REGIME OF PARTICIPATION"

THE proof that General Henri Giraud and his followers are intent upon setting up a new version of the Vichy regime is now available. According to a United Press dispatch, Giraud stated on May 2 that he favors for post-war France, a "regime of participation," one that is neither communist nor fascist. He further intimated that capitalism in France was dead.

We must beware of sentences of death against capitalism coming from rightist and reactionary circles. They do not mean capitalism, in the sense of the ownership of the means of production; to them capitalism means liberal democracy with its heritage of the French Revolution, which introduced on the European continent the principles of equality for all. Hitler, Mussolini, Pétain—all these call themselves anti-capitalists. Giraud unblushingly belongs to this category of spurious anti-capitalists, who would throw out democracy, under the guise of abolishing capitalism, while leaving all control to the former privileged owners of wealth through the instrumentality of the corporate state. This is the instrumentality depended upon by all those who would like to return to the authoritarianism and personal rule of the Middle Ages. For Giraud failed to mention an alternative economic order to replace capitalism—that of democratic socialism. No one will suspect Giraud of being a socialist. The difference between Pétain and Giraud is one of realism. Pétain thought that Hitler would permit France to have an indigenous corporate state of her own with some vestige of quasi-independence and the right to establish a French racial state, while Giraud is convinced that this cannot be achieved under Hitler, and is therefore trying to achieve it with the cooperation of our own State Department.

(*Continued on page* 18)

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REALITIES AND VALUES

OUR CONGRATULATIONS TO Dr. Stephen S. Wise on the completion of fifty years in the Jewish ministry! Half a century is a long enough period of time for even a historian to take note of. As Dr. Wise looks back on the last half-century of Jewish history in America, he may well feel, like Ulysses, that he has been a part of all he has witnessed. His dynamic personality has kept him in the forefront of the struggle for Jewish freedom, solidarity and self-esteem. May he live to see the realization of the guiding vision of his life in the establishment of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine.

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE for Palestine, representing all the organizations participating in the United Palestine Appeal, adopted strong resolutions denouncing the British White Paper policy and calling on the government of the United States to press for the opening up of Palestine to Jewish immigration and the abolition of the restrictions on land-purchase by Jews. It also urged Great Britain and the United States to take immediate steps to save European Jewry and denounced the ineffectiveness of the Bermuda Conference. The U.P.A. Conference pledged all resources to aid in the prosecution of the war and protested against the denial of a Jewish army. The resolutions were backed up by eloquent addresses. Though Dr. Weizmann was prevented by illness from attending, his address was read by Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, National Chairman of the U.P.A. Others who spoke included Judge Louis Levinthal, Dr. Stephen S. Wise, Dr. Israel Goldstein and Frank Gannett. But, to give effect to the resolutions of the Conference, they need be backed up by eloquent deeds as well as eloquent words. These must come from the Jewish public in terms of constant and ever-increasing financial contributions to the U.P.A.

THE RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE reports a Seder service conducted by Rabbi Ulrick Steuer in which 58 clergymen and their wives participated. Rabbi Steuer, in extending the invitation, declared that he wanted the clergy of other faiths to familiarize themselves with Jesus' Jewish background, reminding them that the Last Supper was a Seder service. We have no doubt that the Seder presided over by Rabbi Ulrick served the purpose he intended, but did it, at the

same time and in equal degree, serve the purpose for which the Seder was designed, that of inspiring Jews with hope for and faith in the liberation and redemption of Israel and Judaism? We have our doubts on that point. Religious worship and religious apologetics are two different things. They do not very well mix.

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THE STANDARDS FOR RELIGIOUS functions which the New York Board of Jewish Ministers has adopted reveal the extent to which vulgarity, theatricalism and commercialism have invaded our religious life. Regarding funerals, for example, the new code reads: "The use of lighting effects upon the casket while the rest of the chapel is darkened, and other elaborate devices in the Funeral Chapel, is to be discouraged." "It is not proper to serve any refreshments on the cemetery grounds, either after a funeral or after an unveiling service." Touching upon Bar Mitzvahs: "No photographs of the Bar Mitzvah ceremony should be taken in the Synagogue." The Rabbis will undoubtedly welcome the adoption of these standards, but they will not succeed in maintaining them unless the laity cooperate. The greatest menace to dignified and modest ritual are the so-called "masters of ceremonies" who concoct all sorts of fantastic notions of ceremony, and then intimidate the poor laity into absolute obedience. No one is so cowed as the bride, or the parents of the Bar Mitzvah, in the clutches of this new kind of master, the master of ceremonies.

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JUDGE JONAH J. GOLDSTEIN is to be congratulated for his courage and his sense of justice. He resigned from the American Bar Association because that organization refused admittance to a New York Negro. Arthur Garfield Hays, equally admirable, followed the lead of Judge Goldstein. Jews should not hesitate to denounce each and every manifestation of racial or religious intolerance. It is our sacred duty and our best defense.

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New Currents, A JEWISH monthly, publishes a short piece by Samuel Grafton, the popular columnist, and the Jewish people may be grateful for a new and vigorous voice on the American scene. His hard-hitting style should get his message across. "A group interest," he writes, "calls for a group program. . . . That does not mean depending blithely on the fact that the Jew has equality under the law. There is no substitute for struggle. . . . Jews must give up the theory that organized struggle will tend to isolate them, and emphasize their group nature. . . . The Jews' moral position in America will be firm . . . when the Jew is ready to parade down Fifth Avenue on one of their holidays. . . ." Now that the question whether the Jews shall act as a corporate entity, is on the agenda, such plain talk is gratifying.

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THE FEDERATION LEADERS ARE still working on the plan to divide the American public into: Catholic, Protestant, and non-sectarian. With so many burdens to carry, must Jews in New York help to maintain social agencies which have no specific Jewish reason for being? Must they support non-sectarian organizations from exclusively Jewish funds? The Jewish Social Service Association in New York, associated with Federation, conducts the Consultation Center, which received considerable publicity in an article in the *Readers Digest* for April. The work the Consultation Center does is, apparently, very fine. There is no debate on that score. But there is much to debate about, when Jewish funds have to bear the brunt of administrative costs. If the reader will turn to the article elsewhere in this issue concerning the "euthanasians," he will understand better how it is that Jewish philanthropy is constantly being driven into non-sectarianism.

Survivalists and Euthanasians

By MORDECAI M. KAPLAN

The Inner Conflict

THE inner life of American Jewry, upon which its future depends more than on outward conditions is at the present time harassed by a tug-of-war between two opposing forces, one disruptive and centrifugal, the other constructive and centripetal. On the one hand, American Jewry harbors forces that are strangling Jewish solidarity, Jewish values and Jewish faith. And on the other, it harbors forces that give promise of conserving and vitalizing those manifestations of Jewish life. There are no institutions or organizations in which one type of force operates to the exclusion of the other. The same is true of individuals. For the sake of the argument, however, we may divide American Jewry into two categories. Those Jews in whose souls the constructive tendencies have the upper hand may be called *survivalist Jews.* Those in whom the disruptive tendencies prevail may be called *euthanasian Jews.* "Euthanasia" is a term used for painless, peaceful death. This is what many Jews, who regard Judaism as a liability and a misfortune, would like to see come to the Jewish people. Their most ardent wish is to see the Jewish people being quietly and blissfully absorbed by the general population, so that there would no longer be any Jewish problem to bedevil the world.

The survivalists are either affiliated with the synagogue, or they are identified with some phase of the Jewish nationalist movement. Whether it be one or the other, they want the Jews to survive as a group or corporate entity, because they find something inherently worthwhile in the Jewish way of life. There can be no Jewish way of life without Jewish aggregation. Synagogue Jews find that worth in the traditional beliefs and practices. If they are orthodox Jews that worth is based on the assumption that God displayed through miracle and self-revelation His special concern in Israel. If they are non-orthodox Jews, they find the ethical and spiritual implications of those traditions to be inherently worth fostering. Survivalist Jews who have become dedetached from the synagogue find sufficient reason for living a Jewish life because of the creative possibiliites that inhere in it. Jewish life, they are convinced, has given sufficient evidence of such creativity in all fields of human endeavor, economic, social and cultural, to warrant the belief that, if Jews were permitted to live in peace, they would more than justify their existence as a people among peoples.

The euthanasian Jews are certainly not identified with the Jewish nationalist movement in any of its aspects. Some of them are nominally members of temples, but such membership is not prompted by religious convictions. It is generally motivated by loyalty to parental memory, or by the desire to conform to social expectation. As a rule, to which there are but few exceptions, these Jews are abysmally ignorant of the Jewish past and of its cultural treasures. They could far outdo in their Jewish illiteracy the American illiteracy which some of the 7,000 college freshmen recently exemplified. Everything connected with Judaism is for them an exotic orientalism which is entirely out of place in, and out of step with, the occidental way of life.

They are known as Jews merely because they happen to have been born to Jewish parents. Yet they are aware that in the minds of non-Jews they occupy a niche apart, reserved for those who are

not fully accepted as an integral part of the majority population. They know that they are expected by the general community to respond to Jewish appeals for relief. They dare not ignore those appeals, because, if they permit the poor to fall a burden on the non-Jews, they will be charged with permitting their fellow-Jews to become a nuisance. The same is true of other forms of social service. The Y.M.C.A.'s do not want to have their facilities used by Jews. They say, "Why don't the Jews provide social and recreational facilities for their own?" Who should take care of Jewish delinquents, if not Jews? And where shall Jews who take up medicine get hospitals to admit them on their staffs? These euthanasian Jews, who usually are well off financially, are forced against their own will to build Jewish hospitals. Then, of course, there is the problem of anti-Semitism which is almost an obsession with euthanasian Jews. They organize powerful committees to combat anti-Semitism, and they find themselves defending the good name of the Jews against libelous attacks. No one can gainsay the fact that these euthanasian Jews are kind-hearted, and mean well with Jews as individual persons. They may hate the Jewish people taken collectively, but they sympathize with the lot of the individual Jew whom they regard as handicapped by his Judaism, especially if he is the victim of anti-Semite brutality. They therefore respond to the various overseas appeals. They are even willing to include Palestine as a possible haven of refuge for the Jewish victims of the Nazi beasts.

All these facts mean that, even in the contemporary American Jewish scene, one constantly comes across survivalists and euthanasians supporting the same institutions, and engaged in the same activities. Taken superficially this fact seems to be cause for self-gratulation. What could be better than having Jews, who represent such two diametrically opposed tendencies, actually cooperate in many large undertakings? Jews are surely helped physically on a larger scale than they would be, if the rift between the survivalists and the euthanasians were to be widened. The Jews who are in need are, no doubt, better off, by virtue of the fact that those who are in a position to help forget their differences. Yet in the long run Jewish life as a whole is certainly bound to suffer from this coalition. With survivalists hoping to advance Jewish life through the activities which they share with the euthanasians, and with the euthanasians hoping that these same activities will wean Jews away from Judaism, there is bound to result that confusion and that aimlessness which characterize present-day Jewish life. With euthanasians combating anti-Semitism because it does not let them become one hundred percent Gentile, and with survivalists joining them because it does not let them live as Jews, anti-Semitism itself is bound to continue its ambivalent influence on Jewish life, driving some Jews out of Judaism and others into Judaism.

To the question, where does American Jewry stand today, one can only answer that it is in a state of self-entanglement, because, in most of its activities, institutions and organizations, the two tendencies, *viz.* the disruptive and the constructive, are in such a snarl that they neutralize each other.

Influence of Anti-Semitism on Euthanasianism

In the light of this conclusion, the question arises, "Is there anything in the offing that is likely to disentangle these tendencies, and to bring about a realignment which will mobilize about each tendency those whom it actually represents?" The one thing unmistakably visible in the offing, as far as we Jews are concerned, is the growth of anti-Semitism. The growth of anti-Semitism will impel the

euthanasian Jews to intensify their efforts to suppress Jewish individuality and solidarity. This in turn will fortify the survivalists in their determination to strengthen Jewish individuality and solidarity.

The dislocation, which is bound to follow the demobilization of the armed forces and the reversion of American life to a peace economy, is certain to bring about large-scale unemployment. The inevitable recurrence of economic crisis will be followed by the scapegoat ritual. That unfortunately is the one thing for which the masses have been most effectively conditioned. Whenever anything goes wrong in the world—*cherchez le Juif.* The most thorough-going process of mind-conditioning has been the one which Christianity has been carrying on for the last nineteen centuries with reference to the Jews. One cannot be a Christian without being Jew-conscious. Orthodox Christianity is based on a definite interpretation of world history. In that interpretation the Jewish people is the villain of the cosmic drama, without whom Jesus would not have been able to play his role as hero and Savior. It is impossible for one brought up on the Christian tradition, as it is interpreted in the Catholic and the fundamentalist Protestant schools, not to have his first impressions of the Jew associated with fear and hate. The "National Conference of Christians and Jews" undoubtedly represents an attempt to recondition the Christian attitude toward Jews, but it has about as much chance of success as an umbrella in a hurricane.

It is this result of Christian indoctrination that the anti-Semites count on to confuse political and social issues, because Jew-hatred is the one thing that survives of Christianity when all else in it goes by the board. It is therefore the one common denominator among the most diverse and conflicting interests of the general population which can be depended on for whatever sinister purposes the forces of evil may want to employ it.

The effect of the rising tide of anti-Semitism on the euthanasian Jews will be to make them frantically and fanatically opposed to any Jewish activity which tends to strengthen Jewish solidarity and to give it permanance. They will make it a point to prevent Jews from even showing any predilection in favor of international cooperation or the socialization of natural resources or capital. They will be at pains to prove that Jews are completely dejudaized and individualized, and that they have no opinions as Jews on social and political issues. The notorious article by Judge Jerome Frank which appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post* during December, 1941, was a straw in the wind. It indicates how euthanasian Jews plan to ward off the danger of anti-Semitism. It is the old outworn policy of appeasement. Theirs is the typical psychology of the reactionaries among all nations. It is indeed noteworthy that before Pearl Harbor, Judge Frank was an avowed isolationist, and prided himself on having given the American fascist group their watchword "America First." We may well expect that the post-war reaction against the strain and pain of the war years will find expression in a fanatical isolationism of the Ku Klux Klan type. The post-war Ku Kluxers will rekindle the smouldering forces of Jew hatred, and will play up the war as having been a Jew-war, into which the American people was drawn by the "Jew-dealers." Despite, or because of this fact, the euthanasian Jews will become more outspoken in their demands that Jews make themselves as inconspicuous as possible and refrain from calling attention to themselves by any kind of collective action for other purposes than religion and philanthropy. The policy of appeasement will be in the saddle.

Of course, there will have to be large-

scale drives to rehabilitate the lives of millions of Jews in war-torn Europe, to find havens of refuge for the myriads who will have become superfluous. These euthanasian Jews will not be able to withhold their contributions. The momentum of past giving and the machines they have built up will compel them to continue the support of the various relief agencies. As time goes on many of them will become so alienated from the Jewish people that they will no longer respond to any Jewish appeals. But in the meantime they will become more emphatic in insistence that their contributions be earmarked so that they be not used in any way, however indirect, for the enhancement of Jewish life.

The Jewish euthanasians will no longer content themselves with a passive campaign against Jewish survivalism. They have already ventured into the field of ideology. Judge Frank's statement in the *Saturday Evening Post* was not much of a success. But more expert hands are now making a try at formulating a euthanasian ideology. Their most recent move has been to create a theological front known as the "American Council for Judaism." We may expect that, when the war is over, the policy of Jewish euthanasia will take on formidable proportions. It will be played up as constituting a patriotic duty for two reasons: in the first place, it removes an element which disturbs the uniformity, and, therefore, the solidarity of American life; secondly, in putting an end to anti-Semitism by depriving it of its *raison d'être* it eliminates from the American scene a disintegrative influence of tremendous potency. In addition to being patriotic, Jewish euthanasia will be advocated as making for good-will between Jews and Christians by stressing allegedly what both hold in common. Of late the phrase "Judaeo-Christian tradition," has come to be used as a sort of slogan. It is domesticated and nurtured in the growing euthanasian ideologies. Needless to say there will be an ugly side to this ideological campaign. Jewish survivalists will be made out to appear as unpatriotic Americans and as intolerant Jews with not a spark of good-will in their hearts.

Influence of Anti-Semitism on Survivalism

Of course Jewish survivalists will not submit demurely to the euthanasian campaign. Their efforts will take on two forms: one, that of affirming the right of Jews to survival as a people or nation, the other, that of reenforcing the inner urge to such survival.

There will undoubtedly be a marked intensification of the effort to regain Palestine as a Jewish homeland. The virtual impossibility of rehabilitating Jewish life in those European countries in which Jews lived in considerable numbers before the war—with the exception of Russia—is bound to render quite irresistible the pressure on Palestine as the only haven for at least two or three million of the homeless Jews. However, humanitarian reasons alone will not constitute sufficient ground for the Jewish claim to Palestine. The retort of the Arab nationalists to humanitarian reasons is that Palestine has done more than her share in a humanitarian way toward helping the Jews. They say: "Let those countries which come to us in the name of humanitarianism display some of it themselves and admit Jews to their vast unexplored territories."

Jews will have to reaffirm their claim to Palestine in the very terms in which it was recognized in the Balfour Declaration and in the Mandate. Of all lands in the world, Palestine is the one to which Jews should be able to come as of right and not merely on sufferance. That right is based on a historic claim which has never been relinquished, and which the nations, in awarding to England the Mandate in Palestine, recognized as legitimate. This historic claim will have to be vali-

dated by a modern ideology of Jewish survival. Mankind will have to learn that the Jewish people refuses to remain its family skeleton. This skeleton has walked out of the closet and insists upon retrieving its body. That body is the land of Palestine.

A far more difficult task, however, than to affirm the right of the Jews to survive in Palestine will be to affirm the right of Jews to maintain their group identity in America. If Jewish religion actually functioned in the life of at least the majority of American Jews, there would be no difficulty in maintaining the principle of Jewish solidarity. Under present circumstances, however, Jewish unity has to be based on the awareness of a common history, on a common interest in Palestine and on common cultural values either already achieved or capable of being achieved. This means that the only possible bond of Jewish unity anywhere in the diaspora can be cultural individuality. So far, in none of the post-war plans is the freedom to foster group individuality on a cultural basis expressly recognized. It will therefore be necessary for Jewish survivalists to labor with all who genuinely want democracy instead of fascism to govern the post-war world, and to convince them that from a spiritual and ethical standpoint cultural individuality is entitled to all the rights and privileges of religious individuality. A cultural or civilizational group, such as the Jews are henceforth bound to be, is intrinsically as much of a church or religious organism as any of the recognized denominational bodies.

For Jews, however, to be willing to go to all the trouble involved in affirming their right as Americans to foster Jewish group survival in America implies that they feel strongly enough the need of living as Jews. This need cannot possibly be merely a reaction to anti-Semitism. It must be an intrinsic inner urge to live out certain habits and attitudes of mind which are an integral part of one's very soul and being. How many or what kind of American Jews possess such urge? When we take stock of this basic fund of vitality and élan, without which all our plans are like trying to run an engine without fuel, what do we find?

First among those who possess this fundamental will to live as Jews are the traditionalist Jews who have come but recently from environments in which the medieval outlook and way of life were the rule. These Jews, whose number is greater than most of us suspect—at least a million out of the five million Jews in this country—will constitute a reservoir for the next two or three generations for the vitality, élan or will to live as Jews. This is the main reservoir from which Jews will draw for their leaders in the struggle for survival, and for values worth surviving for. The traditionalist Jews are those who believe sincerely in the supernatural origin of the Torah, in the divine affirmation of Israel's primacy among peoples and in the supernatural advent of a Messiah. For Jews who hold such beliefs, Judaism is a sum of moral and religious values worth guarding and fostering in the face of the bitterest hostility and persecution.

But what of those Jews who find themselves incapable of subscribing to these traditional beliefs? Whence are they to derive that vitality, that will to live as Jews which would impel them to affirm the right to foster Jewish group individuality?

Some of that vitality or will to live as Jews they must be assumed as possessing, otherwise they would belong to the euthanasians and would feel no need for affirming the right to Jewish survival. The question with them is how to re-enforce that urge to Jewish life which they still possess? In all likelihood whatever urge they do possess they owe to Zionism and

the national renaissance. Re-enforcement will have to consist in developing conditions and agencies that will motivate the desire to maintain Jewish individuality in an American environment. The traditionalist Jew, apart from having an inspiring rationale for his Jewish loyalty, has the advantage of finding enough to occupy him as a Jew. He prays three times a day; he recites a benediction before partaking of anything and says grace after each meal; he has to exercise numerous cautions and restraints in observing the Sabbath and festivals in addition to attending religious services and observing religious practices associated with those days. In fact, for the traditionalist, being a Jew is a full time job. But for those who are so situated that they cannot observe the Jewish Sabbaths and festivals, who have lost or have never cultivated the habit of reciting daily prayers and the benedictions for various occasions, and who, in addition, find the entire traditional ideology out of gear with their general outlook on life, what is there to engage their thought, their emotions, their energies?

Thus far there has been no satisfactory answer to that question. This is why the life of the American Jew is vacuous, uncreative and dependent entirely upon the momentum of the past. With the counter influence of the non-Jewish environment ever diminishing the power of that momentum, the prospect of providing rich and satisfying Jewish experience is none too bright. In the five million Jews there is surely a number of Jews who will no longer find this state of suspended animation endurable. To suffer in person or by proxy all the liabilities of a persecuted minority group with no assets to compensate for such suffering is to remain in an unnatural state. Rejecting the way of euthanasia as cowardly and having experienced something of the exhilirating effect of the awakening Jewish spirit in Palestine, these Jews will rally around some philosophy and program which will help to make Jewish life interesting, beautiful and joyous.

A Survivalist Program for Non-Traditionalist Jews

American Jews, who no longer find the traditional conception of Judaism with its regimen of observances compatible with their way of life and thought, but who nevertheless want to remain Jews and to bring up their children as Jews, will find themselves compelled to enrich the content of Jewish living. They will realize that there are four areas in American Jewish life which are at present extremely arid and unproductive, and which are badly in need of being intellectually and spiritually irrigated and rendered fruitful. These areas are Jewish culture, Jewish ethics, Jewish religion and Jewish status. The order in which they are named has nothing to do with their rank in importance.

What consciousness is to an individual culture is to a people. A people's culture finds expression in history, literature and art. The only way in which a member of a people can share its collective consciousness is by learning its history, reading its literature and fostering its art. The Jewish people has had all those three things ever since it became aware of itself as a people. But though it possessed them to an intense degree, their range was limited. The last 150 years have witnessed a remarkable widening of the range of Jewish culture. It began with the writing of Jewish history in the modern spirit. But, although much progress has been made in historical scholarship, no progress has been made in translating that scholarship into youth and adult education.

The same is true of literature. During the last century and a half there has been a vast output of literature, modern in form and content, which reflects the spirit

of the Jewish people, and which can take its place alongside the best in other national cultures. This literature is written mainly in Hebrew and Yiddish, but much of it also exists in the dominant languages of the Occident. Once again what is needed is to select and organize from that vast wealth enough to constitute a constellation of Jewish literary values as part of modern culture.

As for the arts, we are only at the very beginning in the process of creating a modern Jewish art. We have highly talented Jews in all the fields of art, in music, drama, dance, painting, sculpture and architecture, but most of our people still lack the understanding that unless all these arts begin to function in Jewish life, there can be no Jewish life in the diaspora. If Jews are to want to continue living as Jews despite anti-Semitism, it is imperative to have Judaism of our day spell deep joy for the harassed millions of our people in western lands. That joy can be derived from nothing so much as from the flowering of the creative arts as a means of conveying the wide range of emotions that seethe in the heart of the Jew.

A second item in the post-war program will have to be the ethical aspect of Jewish life. At present we Jews are so integrated into the general life about us that we are content to abide by the ethical standard of the majority. If Jews want to foster group solidarity they must meet the general expectation that any group differentiation justify itself by conforming to a higher ethical standard than the average. We have, of course, the great moral axioms like the Ten Commandments and the ethical teachings of the Holiness Code and some of the great sayings of the prophets. These are trumpet calls to the good life, but what today constitutes the good life must be set forth in detailed guidance in the vast maze of conflicting interests and duties and loyalties. But even more important than a series of Jewish ethical codes for the manifold of complex situations are agencies to formulate Jewish public opinion which would denounce moral turpitude, and to render such opinion effective in reducing moral violations to a minimum.

The third item in the program for enriching the content of Jewish living is religion. What we have of Jewish religion is adequate only for the gradually diminishing number of traditional Jews. The non-traditionalist Jews experience a lack of Jewish religion almost as great as of Jewish cultural and ethical values. The reason for this is not too far to seek. Traditional Jewish religion is based upon the historicity of the supernatural self-revelation of God on Mt. Sinai and of the miracles of the Red Sea and the Wilderness. Both these assumptions are unqualifiedly rejected by the modern mind. The belief in God will have to be based henceforth upon a different foundation, and religious observances and worship will have to be rendered and interpreted in terms of what, to the modern person, is a tenable conception of God.

Hitherto Jews both in the rabbinate and the laity, confronted with the challenge of historical science and philosophic outlook, have managed to work out for themselves individually some kind of reinterpretation whereby they transpose the traditional religious values into the modern idiom. But there is a wide gap between the thinking of our scholars and men of learning in all that pertains to Jewish religion and the actual information imparted to the laity. That gap must be bridged.

The bridging of the gap between what is now known by scholars about Jewish religion and what is taught to the laity should lead to a frank facing of the problem of religious observances. That problem has hitherto been dealt with in highly emotionalized terms which ob-

scure the issues. The numerous factors pro and con that must be taken into account with regard to each specific observance must be carefully weighed. Besides, as with cultural values, the problem of religious observances is that there are so many phases of human life in which there is a dearth of them, or of the type that is spiritually rewarding. Wedding anniversaries, birthdays, housewarmings, are only a few of the many occasions that are permitted to remain esthetically drab and spiritually arid.

The final item in a program of Jewish living is so important that it may either be considered the prerequisite to all of the preceding items or constitute their culmination. That is the item of Jewish status, the relation of the Jews as a group to the nations of which they have become an integral part.

The achievement of a definite Jewish status involves two steps: (1) the theoretic formulation of it, and (2) the implementing of the formula arrived at.

It is doubtful, however, whether Jews will take time off or have the peace of mind to sit down and argue through to a conclusion the problem of Jewish status. In all likelihood, the theory will emerge in the very process of implementing it. That process begins as soon as Jews are annoyed by the chaos of organizations that overlap, duplicate and compete with one another. The time must come when some kind of over-all community will be evolved in which all Jews who want to remain Jews will be duly registered.

Already there is a tendency to greater collaboration and federation among functionally similar institutions. For the present, these federations and communal agencies gravitate into the hands of the euthanasian Jews who systematically sabotage all attempts to use them for Jewish education, Jewish culture, the upbuilding of Palestine or the fostering of Jewish religion. But in the nature of things, they will become tired of giving their time and energies to what they regard as a dying cause. The communal agencies will ultimately pass over into the hands of the survivalists and will gradually be fused into an organic entity, which will constitute a new and unprecedented type of Jewish community.

For an organic community based on voluntarism is a new and unprecedented type of a continuing social organism. But Jews have shown themselves in the past equal to the task of social creativity. There is good reason to believe that they are able to do so again.

Thus as the euthanasian Jews become more insistent and aggressive in their purpose to stifle Judaism, the survivalist Jews will respond by rendering Judaism once again creative of human and spiritual values that will give purpose and direction to Jewish life at the same time that they will enhance the life of mankind.

The Duties of the Non-Combatant

By NATHAN BARACK *

IT is related in the Bible (II Samuel 23:13-17) that King David, in a war with the Philistines, expressed a craving for water from the well of Bethlehem, then in possession of the enemy. Three of David's warriors, eager to satisfy their king's desire, broke through the Philistine lines, and secured the water. King David, however, refused to drink it, because his men had obtained it at the risk of life. He poured it as an offering to God.

* Rabbi, Phoenix, Arizona.

Sentiments such as David's probably perturb many truly ethical non-combatants, who do not face directly the danger of loss of life in our present war. Very likely they ask themselves an extremely disturbing question: How can we enjoy a freedom that others are losing their lives to win?

The Talmudic Parable of the Desert Travelers

The answer to this question was given by one highly qualified by outlook and life to discuss it. It was given by Rabbi Akiba, in a famous Talmudic discussion concerning two desert travelers who had water enough only for one. If both shared the water, neither would survive; if only one drank it, at least he would be able to reach civilization. How should the two solve their dilemma? (Talmud, Baba Metzia 62 a).

According to Ben Patira, both should partake of the water—and die—so that one should not witness the death of his colleague. Rabbi Akiba maintained that a man's duty to his own life precedes his duty to his friend's life.

The great patriot and saint has thus provided the answer to our perplexing problem, a problem that confronted him twice in his life. He was the inspiration of the Bar Kochba revolt. He realized that many Jewish lives would be lost before freedom from Rome would be gained. Could the survivors ethically enjoy the freedom that Bar Kochba's warrior's were shedding their blood to win? This question may have existed in the minds of Rabbi Akiba and his opponents when they debated his support of Bar Kochba.

After the Bar Kochba rebellion collapsed, and Hadrian determined to prevent future resistance by crushing the Jewish spirit at its source, Rabbi Akiba, now joined by other great teachers, defied the tyrant again. In order that the dissemination of the Torah might continue, the disciples had to save their lives while their teachers suffered martyrdom. Thus, Judah ben Baba requested five rabbis, ordained secretly by him despite the decree against ordination, to flee from the approaching enemy who had discovered them. But he, Judah ben Baba, with the knowledge of the newly-ordained, remained behind to face martyrdom. (Talmud Sandhedrin 13 a).

Followers of Rabbi Akiba, a leader who was profoundly motivated by love of God and man, must have been disturbed by the fact that their spiritual freedom was rendered possible through the self-sacrifice of their teachers. There were those, like Rabbi Jose ben Kisma, who advocated universal submission; others, like Ben Patira, taught universal martyrdom.

Superficially, the latter viewpoint appears most noble. In reality, it is negative in nature and could lead only to physical and spiritual enslavement. On the other hand, although resistance entailed sure death for many, Rabbi Akiba's positive, Judaic outlook, stemming from his wholehearted allegiance to the Creator of the Universe, led him to teach that life must continue through those who can and will survive free. To Rabbi Akiba, "And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" was an all-inclusive fundamental of faith. (Midrash Rabbah, Bereshit, 24). To him all human beings were dear as creatures in the "image of God." (Ethics of the Fathers, 3:19). As a climax to his lofty philosophy, he knowingly jeopardized and joyfully surrendered his life in order to teach God's truth to his coreligionists.

The great affirmer, however, believed that the life of one takes precedence over the death of two. For the duty to preserve a spiritually free life rests on all. If, in certain crises, one can preserve life only with himself as the medium, one

must do so. For, otherwise, in predicaments essentially similar to the case of the two travelers, if each insisted on the preservation of the life of the other, then, in the words of a brilliant Talmudic scholar, *"en l'davar sof,"* life would never be effectively preserved.

Why did Rabbi Akiba clothe his realistic problem in the parable of the desert travelers? Perhaps to convey the problem graphically. It was not uncharacteristic of Rabbi Akiba to teach moral principles by means of pointed similes. His comparison of the effect of study on the human heart with the erosion of the rock by means of the constant trickling of drops of water on it is known to all. His description of the world as a shop where the storekeeper permits all to purchase on credit but sends his agents to collect the debt with or without the knowledge of the purchaser is a cogent presentation of Rabbi Akiba's philosophy of free will and reward and punishment. (Ethics of the Fathers, 3:30).

It is also possible that the decision concerning martyrdom had to be transmitted at a time when an open statement would have proved self-defeating because of the ubiquitous Roman spies. In any case, whatever really prompted Ben Patira and Rabbi Akiba to discuss the case of the two desert travelers, the opinion of the latter is in harmony with the positive nature of Judaism and with the true conception of God as a creator, and is applicable to the basically similar problems of today.

The Parable Applied to Our Situation

Thus far we have dealt with the right of those who do not face direct danger of loss of life to the enjoyment of the free institutions whose survival is made possible through the sacrifice of others. But this does not mean that, in the current war, ethical individuals can, with a clear conscience, be content in the mere exercise of this right. The nature of our struggle creates certain obligations on the non-combatants which will be more readily seen if we modify the case of the two travelers to fit the conditions of the modern crisis. Since these are not legal but ethical problems, where not only actions but also sentiments are important, we shall consider them, too, in our extended case.

Let us visualize the situation as completely as possible. The two travelers are convinced that only one can survive. Who shall it be? They agree to select the survivor on the basis of age and other factors, or by casting lots. In either case, before they make their painful choice, they do their utmost to mitigate the sad fate of the prospective victim. They promise each other that the survivor, whoever he chance to be, shall attempt to fill the gap of father and husband in the dead man's family.

Now picture the feelings of the survivor as he emerges from the desert. He thinks about the minutes preceding the choice, the mutual promise, the mixed feelings of each. He remembers his own hope that he would win life, his fear that he might not, mitigated by the thought that his friend would care for his family. He recalls the drawing of the lots, his impulsive sigh of relief, checked instantaneously by a glimpse at the sad but courageous face of his friend. As he walks ahead, he constantly thinks of his sacred promise.

He is now back in civilization, always conscious of the fact that *he had enough water only because his friend did not drink at all.* This awareness that his survival was made possible by the death of another leads him to regard his life as sacred, and not to be wasted on trivialities. And, of course, no sacrifice in behalf of his friend's family is too big, for, regardless of the magnitude of the sacrifice, it cannot equal the value of his life.

This version of the two travelers in the

desert is, of course, true today, but on a grand scale, with hundreds of millions of individuals as participants. Countless human lives have been surrendered in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Why? The answer is obvious; to fight a monster more cruel and destructive than the burning sun of the desert; to create an oasis where there was only wasteland; to bring happiness into a world of hardship.

If, in the words of the Talmud, both drank the water, that is, no one resisted the dictators on the battlefield, all of us would eventually be tortured into slavery or death. To be free from the tyrant, total war must be waged.

In this all-out warfare some unfortunately must die that others may live. The survivors, consequently, *owe their lives* as well as their freedom *to the fact that brave men have risked and lost their lives.*

Furthermore, what impels our true heroes to face possible and often sure death, if not the hope that a better world would be built by their fellow citizens? Do we not speak of the world of justice that will follow the fall of the tyrant? This *dream,* for which our martyrs give their lives, *is like a promise* by the living to the dead—an oath sealed in blood!

When we grasp these two facts, that if our martyrs had not fought and died, whether as selectees or as volunteers, we might have shared their fate, and that we are committed by a silent promise to the millions of dead to persevere in the cause for which they died, we cannot calmly go about our daily occupations as if nothing had happened. We must feel a profound sense of guilt, unless we actively *sanctify our way of life* and *fulfil our promise* by a constant aiming at the creation of a just and harmonious society. Those who truly have the hearts and the minds to understand the sacred, although indirect, pact wtih their fallen heroes, and who can see that their own life is a gift paid for with another's life can no longer speak of having already sacrificed too much of their wealth, or time or energy in the pursuit of personal and social ideals. They will rather devote every ounce of their energy, every minute of their time, every cent of their wealth not consumed in supplying their essential needs to one single endeavor—the realization of a truer and godlier world.

The fate of our civilization rests on these truly ethical individuals.

GIRAUD'S REGIME

(*Continued from Page* 5)

Only in this light can we understand the policy pursued by Giraud concerning the Jews in North Africa. Only by understanding that the treatment of the Jews in North Africa is merely a prelude to the handling of the Jewish problem in post-war France, can we comprehend the grave danger which threatens Jewish equality in post-war Europe and the extent to which the democracies are casting the Jews to the wolves of war-time Nazi extermination, post-war racism and closed-door policies. The documentary evidence produced by the French Republican Committee on April 27 is incontrovertible. We refer to the memorandum issued by General Giraud, calling for the assignment of Jewish officers in the French army to special tasks, in order "to avoid having the entire Jewish population gain the title of war veteran, which might prejudice the status to be given to these people after the war."

This clearly implies the planning of a different post-war status for Jews in France than the one they enjoyed before the war. It means inferior citizenship for Jews. It means racism, notwithstanding the apologetics of Mr. Sumner Welles. The test for democratic leadership in the United States is at hand. People who tolerate racism in Europe, will also tolerate it in the United States.

Music Notes

By JUDITH K. EISENSTEIN

MY visitor was a little awe-inspiring. Dignified and portly, with a small gray beard and eyeglasses, he bowed stiffly from the waist, in true German fashion, and announced himself as Doctor of Medicine L——. He hung his overcoat in the closet, but he retained his hat in his hand and brought it, together with his brief case, into the living room. We sat down together and Dr. L— proceeded to tell me his business.

He had painstakingly written down the tunes and words of about thirty *Zemirot* which have been sung in his family for many generations. It is an old family, proud possessors of documents which testify to a long, well-established history in its German town. Doctor L—— is one of a large number of brothers and sisters, now scattered over the world.

He showed me his notebooks. There were two. One contained a complete transliteration of the Hebrew into the German pronunciation. The other contained the same songs, transliterated into the Sefardic, because the Doctor was under the impression that here in America one uses only the Sefardic. He is a retired physician, for whom music was, and still is, only a beloved hobby. It was easy, just in glancing at his neat and somewhat childlike notation, to see the hard work and loving care that had gone into it. Under more careful scrutiny the manuscripts revealed true scholarship both in Music and Hebrew. Said my guest, "I had to change the rhythm a little bit to allow for the shift of accent in the Sefardic pronunciation. And it is hard to give up the beautiful 'au' that we have. It is so expressive, this 'au' as in 'Mausheh'," There was such an ache of nostalgia in the statement that I was obliged to smile sympathetically, though I could not remember having shared the sentiment.

Doctor L—— continued to give me a picture of his own large immediate family, gathered at the Sabbath table; of his father returning from the synagogue, to be greeted by the horde of them; his hands and coat-tails seized upon by eager youngsters waiting for the Sabbath blessing. His father would spread out his hands over all of them and chant his blessing. Then all of them would join lustily in *"Shalom alekhem mal'akhe ha-sharet!"*

This was the moment when the Doctor needed his hat. He was going to sing for me. And he did, with a twinkle in his eye as he came upon a jolly tune with a Tyrolean touch, and with a murmur of "Ah, Mozart!" at the end of a fluent and graceful little passage. "Ach, how we used to sing this one, ten of us around the table, so strong everyone in the town would stop to hear us!" and as he sang it, his facial muscles began to work hard to keep control. The twinkle was gone, and the singer had to remove his glasses, to wipe off a betraying moisture.

"Surely many other people could sing these songs here. So many people from Germany must remember them, would be happy to use them in this country. I cannot let them be lost and die."

The good doctor is quite right. We dare not let these *Zemirot* be lost and die. They are testimony to the unique phenomenon that was the Jewish family, in this case as it appeared in Germany.

Given a chance to live and endure through a number of generations in comparative peace, without being pushed about and forced to migrate constantly, the Jewish family flourished as a small dynamo of cultural expression. Its comfort and well-being were dignified and sanctified by beautiful forms. Little islands of Jewish civilization, they took unto themselves the best elements of the world about them, combined them deftly with their own heritage, and fashioned them into highly individual art forms. The *Zemirot* are among these, along with the exquisitely illustrated Haggadahs, the wrought silver Kiddush cup, the gay little castle-like spice box. Like them, the songs should be preserved and displayed to advantage.

This has been done successfully in England, where the community seems to have a more appreciative regard for the beauty of age and tradition. There is, for example, a delightful little book called "Medieval Hebrew Minstrelsy — Songs for the Bride-Queen Feast." (Published in 1926 by James Clarke and Co., Ltd., London.) The music has been notated and arranged for four-part singing by Rose L. Henriques. The texts have been translated into English, to fit the tunes, by Herbert Loewe. It is illustrated by Beatrice Herschfeld. The collaborators are all members of the same family, and the book contains their traditional melodies.

The melodies do not sound at all like those of Eastern Europe, though they may well be descended from the same source. (The family traces its history to 1650, to Konigsberg which was then Polish.) Whatever originality and distinctiveness they possess lie in their unusual rhythmic patterns. These patterns follow closely the scansion of the medieval poems, unlike our more familiar tunes, which may have more intriguing melodic progressions, but which force the poems out of joint when they conventionalize them into commonplace Western rhythms.

"Medieval Hebrew Minstrelsy" contains, in addition to its songs, most valuable commentary: an introduction explaining the method of translation; a special introduction addressed, "Virginibus Puerisque," to the maidens and youths of England; and a final chapter which is both illuminating and entertaining, called "Literary Parallels to the *Zemirot*." All of this is written by Mr. Loewe, in elegant prose and with dry British humor.

Another book from England is "Oneg Shabbos," an anthology of *Zemirot* by H. Meyerowitch. (1937, Edward Goldston, Ltd., London.) Here we have texts, in Hebrew only, of a large number of *Zemirot,* with melodies from various families, with several Hasidic melodies, and a few original tunes by living composers as well. What this book lacks in explanation, historic notes and English translation it makes up for in completeness, in variety and in its happy inclusion of the complete text of the Grace after Meals, together with the music of the responses. Here we have *Zemirot* in the free style of the Synagogue chant, *Zemirot* in the Sefardic tradition, and *Zemirot* with the rhaphsodic quality of the Hasidic song.

Mr. Loewe, in his introduction to the "Minstrelsy" volume, says in true liberal fashion, "Every family has its own tunes, and every family deems its own tunes better than any other's." Unfortunately, in our day many families have no tunes at all. Some families can still point with pride to "mother's gefillte fish." How few can boast of "father's *Zemirot*" which once elevated the eating of that fish into a sacrament! Into this vacuum which remains to us it would be far from harmful to introduce the tunes of the English families, or the tunes of the German family, which should most certainly be published. It would be well, in addition, to organize research expeditions into the hearts of any large surviving families who still sing *Zemirot,* in order that we might preserve the warmth, the charm and the beauty for our Jewish families today.